

DDA Registry
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TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

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OFFICER'S
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COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

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26 March 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

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Director of Security

SUBJECT: Pay Enhancement for Polygraph Officers

1. Reference is made to the Director of Personnel's memorandum of 8 March 1985 which deals with the need for a significant pay enhancement for polygraph officers administering polygraph examinations on a regular basis. The memorandum recommends a rate not to exceed 20 percent of base pay. Your office has asked for additional supporting justification and a rationale for this pay adjustment.

2. The 20 percent pay adjustment figure was arrived at following comprehensive discussions with the Office of Personnel (OP) which extended over several months. Many alternatives were considered including 5%, 10% and 15% pay adjustments. These were set aside as probably inadequate to counter the current heavy bias against polygraph assignments that is prevalent in the security "market place." The straight percentage pay adjustment was vastly preferred by both OP and this Office over the more complicated models such as temporary PSIs or a different pay scale. The two offices see the 20% pay adjustment as easily understood, easily administered, eminently fair and reasonable.

3. For the past three years the Office of Security, faced with a dramatic and continuing growth in polygraph requirements, has sought to achieve a substantial increase in its cadre of examiners. These efforts have featured repeated recruitment exhortations to Security careerists as well as overtures to the private sector. Another major step taken to attract recruits was the opening of the CIA Polygraph School in November 1982, offering a three-month course in the Headquarters area in lieu of the previous six-month stay in Chicago at the Reid School.

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4. In spite of strenuous efforts in this direction, the recruitment drive has not been successful. The Polygraph Division is not adequately staffed to meet today's work requirements. No real relief is in sight. The principal cause of the problem, insofar as internal recruits are concerned, is the reluctance of Security generalists to embark upon what is indisputably the most demanding, pressure-ridden, emotionally-taxing job in the entire Security field.

5. With respect to external recruits, a number of factors frustrate the efforts. Many fall victims to the Professional Aptitude Testing Battery (PATB) standards, an important screening device for polygraph examiners for a number of reasons. Not only in the testing of applicants but also in reinvestigative polygraph activity, the examiner must interact in a most personal and challenging way with a very high calibre "adversary." The examiner must, therefore, among other things, have the intelligence, ideational fluency, vocabulary, abstract reasoning and knowledge of current events that will enable the examiner to command the respect of the person being tested. Very few outside examiners are acceptable in terms of PATB standards. In the recent past, 14 out of 20 such applicants did not reach acceptable levels on the PATB.

6. Many outside polygraphers are not college graduates, a prerequisite for consideration for professional positions in the Office of Security. Virtually no commercial examiner has had any counterintelligence polygraph experience. Moreover, many other Government agencies are shopping the same market to meet their own polygraph expansion goals.

7. By a memorandum to this Office, dated 5 March 1985, the DDA directed: "You are authorized to pay 20 percent premium pay for all polygraph examiners that are actively involved in conducting polygraph examinations." (See Basic) Accordingly, on 6 March 1985 this new pay adjustment policy was announced in the Office of Security.

8. It is submitted that a pay enhancement not to exceed 20 percent is justified based upon the following considerations:

- ° The Polygraph Examiner: The polygraph examiner is the Agency's polygraph program. Anyone can easily purchase a polygraph instrument in the commercial market. Only Agency examiners can produce a finished report upon which the Agency can make clearance decisions or an operational judgment. Furthermore, the examiner carries a tremendous responsibility

which has an important impact on people's careers and the security of Agency operations. It is a heavy burden. An examiner must be tough but empathetic, relentless but understanding, tireless but solicitous of the individual's well-being, appreciative of the emotional needs of others, but able to tolerate their hostility and disregard of his or her own feelings.

° Excellence: Within the last ten days Agency polygraph examiners were assured that senior Agency management had come to recognize their plight and that meaningful action was being taken to remedy the situation. To back off on what is perceived as a psychological commitment would be devastating at this point.

° Psychological Intensity: On a daily basis polygraph examiners are expected to delve into the recesses of an individual's conscience and to do so without leaving a blemish or scar. There is a trauma involved in each examination. It is an experience that is never forgotten. Examiners must ensure that it is done with precision as well as respect for the person being tested. The examiner must question, probe, challenge and rebuff, if necessary, but without belittling, insulting or degrading the examinee. The confrontational aspect of the work is more than significant. Potential candidates for polygraph training are keenly aware that the examiner's job is psychologically intense.

° Workload: Potential candidates for the polygraph program have expressed concern about getting into an assignment which requires constant pressure to produce daily, without any real opportunity for relief once in a while. Added to this is the fact that these officers are "couped up" in a small room all day long. They are expected to stay with the program for a minimum of 4-5 years. In effect, the workload is relentless; the cases are never ending; and everything requires accurate and timely reporting. Each case drains a certain amount from the examiner. The overall stress factor is significant.

° Importance: Polygraph testing has played a crucial role in the Agency's security program for the past 35 years. There is incontrovertible evidence of the value of this vital procedure as reflected in the fact that about 80 percent of the security disapproval decisions are based on information developed during polygraph testing. The key to a quality program is the examiner.

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° Uniqueness: There is a specialized skill required and not everyone can or should try to master this unique calling. The Agency cannot order people to be polygraph examiners. To do so would have an adverse impact on the product, the examiner, and the individual being tested. Unlike the commercial examiner, paid by the case and compelled by market-place realities towards a production-like cadence, the CIA examiner employs the polygraph as an investigative tool, making every effort to get the truth. That is the principal concern at all times and the unique importance of each individual is stressed.

° Comparability: Far less qualified examiners in the private sector sometimes receive a higher salary for less stressful work. The most qualified polygraph examiners in the commercial world can charge lawyers and insurance companies \$300 to \$600 per case (four to eight hours) for a single-issue examination. The Agency's program, covering numerous, often unrelated relevant issues, both counterintelligence and lifestyle, stretches the technique to the breaking point, requiring great skill and strong quality controls.

° National Security Agency: The National Security Agency (NSA) makes extensive use of the polygraph and recently the Agency has been training some NSA officers. There are, however, essential differences. All of NSA's work equates to applicant and industrial programs. Their examiners are never required to serve overseas; they are never required to conduct operational examinations. In any case, NSA is experiencing similar problems in attracting and retaining qualified people and they too are studying a pay enhancement program.

° Counterintelligence: There has been a recent upsurge in espionage cases. There were more prosecutions in 1984 than in any year since the 1950s--quite possibly because of an increasing hostile intelligence threat. Polygraph screening is the single most effective defense against penetration of the Agency. This was recognized by both David Barnett and Christopher Boyce, who had a healthy respect for the Agency's polygraph capabilities. This requires experienced, highly motivated, and dedicated polygraph examiners who will stay with the program.

° Operational Impact: Polygraph activity is a worldwide program. Examiners must be ready to travel on a moment's notice. There is a "burn-out" point. Some dedicated examiners have opted out of the program because of the tremendous pressure on them and their families as a result of the grind of operational cases for the Directorate of Operations.

° Being Monitored: Every word that transpires in the Headquarters polygraph rooms is recorded and can be reviewed when complaints arise. Such reviews usually result in praise for the professionalism of Agency examiners, as reflected in the recent Inspector General report on the handling of difficult problem cases. To appreciate the impact of working in such an environment, Agency managers would have to imagine themselves being tape-recorded during every counseling session, every discussion on performance appraisal, and every interaction with their peers and subordinates. Examiners must be conscious at all times that they are to be effective, yet careful to avoid any statements, words or inflections that might be interpreted as cause for a grievance. The polygraph examiners are in a risky business, in more ways than one, and they are carefully selected for maturity, emotional stability, evenhandedness and dedication.

° Cost-Effectiveness: A significant pay enhancement will prove to be very cost-effective taking into consideration the importance of the polygraph program relative to applicant screening, the reinvestigation process, support to operations, and support to special industrial projects. It is well known by Congressional committees and sister agencies in the Intelligence Community that the Agency has a quality program. To keep it that way, the Agency must recruit and train quality examiners and maintain a high level of professionalism in this security discipline.

9. The work performed by Agency polygraph examiners is unique and beyond meaningful comparison to their counterparts in Government and the commercial world. The program is successful because of the caliber of the men and women assigned to the Polygraph Division. Unless the Agency provides a meaningful incentive for this unique service, the Office of Security will not be able to recruit and retain the quality of personnel that is essential.

10. Your approval of the 20% pay adjustment for
polygraph examiners is respectfully requested.

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cc: DDA



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